(ii) assist in the development of a technical plan for the Company's research and educational programes.

Tele-density in India

1950. SHRI KARTAR SINGH DUGGAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the latest percentage of tele-density in India; and

(b) how does it compare with Pakistan and China?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) The latest percentage of tele-density in India as on 30.6.2003 is 5.49.

(b) As per International Telecommunication Union Report-2002, the telephone per 100 population in the year 2001 of Pakistan and China were 2.35 and 13.81 respectively whereas the tele-density of India in the year 2001 was 3.58.

VPTs Tata Teleservices in A.P.

1951. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that M/s Tata Teleservices Ltd. has not provided Village Public Telephones in Andhra Pradesh as per the commitment made in the Licence;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what corrective measures Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The company has provided 1314 Village Public Telephones so far.

(c) Liquidated Damage Charges to the tune of Rs.13.00 crores have been recovered from M/s Tata Teleservices Ltd. for delay in commencement of service as well as delay in provisioning of VPTs and Direct Exchange Lines. A notice was issued in May, 2003 to provide VPTs as well as submit plans to provide balance VPTs by the end of 2003 after excluding the categories of village identified as de-populated villages, villages with population less than 100, Naxalite or insurgency affected villages and to be covered by satellite media in the first phase, failing which steps for encashment the Performance Bank Guarantee will be initiated. M/s Tata Teleservices Ltd. have responded to the notice and submitted plans to cover 165 villages in Andhra Pradesh service areas by December, 2003 and has reported that 4434 villages are in above mentioned categories. Further it has been reported that 879 villages are inaccessible. The fulfilment of the commitments now given by the private operators will be closely monitored.

Illegal routing of National Long Distance calls

1952. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some of the private operators are caught for illegally routing National Long Distance calls in violation of licence and interconnect agreements with the BSNL;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken against the violating companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (c) BSNL has reported that there is no violation of licence and interconnect agreement with BSNL. However, case of M/s World Callnet (Cleartel as brand name) which was advertising and selling the pre-paid Subscriber Trunk Dialing (STD)/International Subscriber Dialing (ISD) cards to telephone customers in the garb of Virtual Calling Card (VCC) came to notice. The STD/ISD calls made from MTNL/BSNL customers were being routed through the telephone lines obtained by Cleartel from M/s Bharti Telenet Limited. Thus the STD/ISD calls originated by MTNL/BSNL customers using these pre-